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050956Z Jul 00

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	DS-00	EUR-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01
	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00
	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	G-00
	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/008W				

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6505  
INFO NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 003634

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR GAYLE SMITH

LONDON FOR PFLAUMER

PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/05/10

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ZI](#) [US](#)

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE SENDS SIGNALS OF  
DISPLEASURE WITH USG

REF: HARARE 3616

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CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR TOM MCDONALD REASONS 1.5 B/D.

1. (C) THE ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT HAS FINALLY FOCUSED ON THE USG'S CRITICAL WORDS AND ACTIONS IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS AND HAS BEGUN SENDING SIGNALS OF ITS DISPLEASURE. THESE INCLUDE NOT ACCREDITING THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE (NDI) AND THE INTERNATIONAL REPUBLICAN INSTITUTE (IRI) AS ELECTION OBSERVERS, SENDING A DIPLOMATIC NOTE AT THE LAST MINUTE STATING THAT IT WOULD NOT RESPOND TO NATIONAL DAY MESSAGES, NOT SENDING A SENIOR GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE AMBASSADOR'S 4TH OF JULY RECEPTION AND GIVING THE RECEPTION NEGATIVE COVERAGE ON THE TELEVISION NEWS. FOREIGN MINISTER MUDENGE EXPRESSED DISPLEASURE WITH THE PROPOSED CONGRESSIONAL ACTIONS TO PLACE "SANCTIONS" ON ZIMBABWE, AND HOPED THE U.S. WILL NOT COME INTO THE SAME LEAGUE AS THE UNITED KINGDOM. WE THINK PRESIDENT MUGABE IS LOOKING FOR SOMEONE ON WHOM TO BLAME THE DEFEAT HIS PARTY WAS HANDED IN THE JUST-CONCLUDED PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION, AND WILL TARGET THE U.S. FOR CRITICISM AS PART OF HIS POST-ELECTION GOVERNANCE STRATEGY AND PRESIDENTIAL RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) AN ACCUMULATION OF RECENT SIGNALS SUGGESTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE IS NOT HAPPY WITH THE USG. ON JULY 3, THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SENT A DIPLOMATIC NOTE, ALONG WITH THE STANDARD FOURTH OF JULY GREETING FROM PRESIDENT MUGABE, STATING THAT IT "HAS THE HONOR TO ADVISE THAT THE PRACTICE OF SPEECHES AT NATIONAL DAY MESSAGES (SIC) HAS BEEN DISCONTINUED." IN  
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RESPONSE, THE AMBASSADOR INFORMED DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER NICHOLAS GOCHE THAT HE PLANNED TO GIVE A SPEECH ON JULY 4. GOCHE REPLIED, "OF COURSE, AMBASSADORS ARE EXPECTED TO SPEAK AT SUCH EVENTS." (COMMENT: WE INTERPRET THIS TOTALLY UNPRECEDENTED AND ABRUPT CHANGE IN PRACTICE AS A WAY TO ATTEMPT TO CENSOR FOREIGN DIPLOMATS FROM SAYING ANYTHING REMOTELY CRITICAL OF THE GOZ AND ITS POLICIES. END COMMENT).

3. (C) LATER THAT DAY, FOREIGN MINISTER MUDENGE PROTESTED LEGISLATION WINDING ITS WAY THROUGH CONGRESS THAT WOULD RESULT IN "SANCTIONS" AGAINST ZIMBABWE AND THE RECENT HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE AFRICA SUBCOMMITTEE. IN PASSING MUDENGE IMPLIED ANTI-USG STATEMENTS MAY BE FORTHCOMING AND REMARKED THAT HE HOPED THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOT BE IN THE SAME LEAGUE AS BRITAIN. (COMMENT: ZIMBABWE AND THE UNITED KINGDOM ARE CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN A VERY ACRIMONIOUS AND PUBLIC DISPUTE THAT HAS RESULTED IN PARALYSIS OF THEIR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. END COMMENT). THE SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE

GOVERNMENT SCHEDULED TO APPEAR AT THE AMBASSADOR'S FOURTH OF JULY RECEPTION, DEPUTY MINISTER GOCHE, WAS CALLED AWAY THE MORNING OF JULY 4 TO DEAL WITH A GROUP OF UNRULY WAR VETS IN BINDURA IN MASHONALAND CENTRAL, AN AREA HE DOES NOT REPRESENT IN PARLIAMENT. WE INTERPRET THIS ABSENCE TO BE THE ZIMBABWEAN EQUIVALENT OF "DIPLOMATIC FLU."

14. (U) THE NIGHTLY NEWSCAST ON THE ZIMBABWE BROADCASTING CORPORATION (ZBC) NORMALLY REPORTS NATIONAL DAY RECEPTIONS IN AN ANODYNE MANNER. IN OUR CASE, THE  
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ZBC DESCRIBED THE EVENT NEGATIVELY AND NOTED AN ALLEGED HEAVY PRESENCE OF THE MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC) MEMBERS AT THE RECEPTION, WHICH IT LIKENED TO A VICTORY CELEBRATION FOR THE OPPOSITION. THE EVENT WAS, IN FACT, ATTENDED BY OVER 700 PERSONS REPRESENTING ALL SECTORS OF ZIMBABWEAN SOCIETY IN AND OUT OF GOVERNMENT. MANY OF THE MDC MEMBERS WHO ATTENDED OUR NATIONAL DAY ARE PROMINENT CONSTITUTIONAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYERS, DEMOCRACY ADVOCATES, AND OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY ACTIVISTS WITH WHOM EMBOFFS HAVE REGULAR CONTACTS.

15. (C) IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT'S REFUSAL TO ACCREDIT ELECTION OBSERVERS FROM IRI AND NDI ONLY DAYS BEFORE THE ELECTION (AND THEREBY RENEGING ON PRESIDENT MUGABE'S PUBLIC PLEDGE TO WELCOME ANY AND ALL INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVERS BE THEY NON-BRITISH), CONSTITUTES, IN OUR VIEW, ANOTHER STRIKE AT AMERICA. WHILE THE AMERICAN GROUPS WERE TWO OF SEVERAL EXCLUDED, AMONG THEM THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, WE HAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE U.S. WAS THE OBJECT OF THE ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT'S EFFORT TO BAR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.

16. (C) COMMENT: WE SENSE A DISTINCT CHILLING IN THE

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DISPLEASURE WITH USG

BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, NOW THAT THE GOVERNMENT HERE HAS  
HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO FOCUS ON SOMETHING OTHER THAN THE  
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ELECTIONS AND TAKEN STOCK OF OUR WORDS AND ACTIONS. SO FAR, THE ZIMBABWEANS' ACTIONS HAVE HEWED TO THE PETTY. NEVERTHELESS, WE CANNOT RULE OUT PRESIDENT MUGABE MAKING US A PRINCIPAL TARGET OF HIS POST PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION GOVERNANCE STRATEGY AND HIS PRESIDENTIAL RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN, WHICH WE PERCEIVE HAS JUST STARTED IN EARNEST. MUGABE IS CLEARLY LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO BLAME FOR HIS PARTY'S RESOUNDING REJECTION IN THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. END COMMENT.

MCDONALD

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